

# NAVY MEDICINE LIVE

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## Putting it in Perspective

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(ONE COMMENT)

**By Cmdr. Arlene Saitzyk, Naval Aerospace Medical Institute**



Remote assignments helped me to truly understand the meaning of Navy family, and what being a Service member is really about.

My journey to become a Navy Psychologist began at Michigan State University where I specialized in Child and Family Clinical Psychology.

My research focused on empowering young girls to maintain their sense of self, vitality, and “voice” during the sometimes rocky transition to adolescence. Interestingly however, my first job post-licensure was working with early adolescent boys! After five years in the field, and my life at a crossroads, I kept recalling my father’s stories as an Army Field Radio Repairman in Germany.




Dedicated to serving others, with a love for the water (in grade school I won an essay contest about my childhood dream to become an Olympic swimmer), and a grand desire for travel, I joined the Navy, and my first assignment was overseas. It was a learning curve to become a military psychologist, but I also found support to integrate my passion for empowering youth, and helped establish a teen health

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clinic in the local high school to foster healthy independence and connection for boys and girls.

I’ve spent much of my career overseas and at sea. These more remote assignments helped me to truly understand the meaning of Navy family, and what being a Shipmate is really about. I am somewhat of an introvert and I knew that duty on board an aircraft carrier was going to be a stretch, with limited “alone time” when one lives with 5000 of their new best friends. Accepting the key to success is sometimes failure, I committed to turn my feelings of apprehension into opportunity, and “leaned in.”

The hours were long and hard and meaningful, and the rewards, usually simple in nature (walking down the flight deck picking up debris at the end of a tough day, or looking out at the Milky Way from an observation point above the flight deck) were profound. Camaraderie during deployment is distinct from anywhere else. And now women have the opportunity deploy in multiple settings – on submarines, in air combat roles, and space (in the most recent class of astronauts, four of the eight chosen are women).

I invite you to consider where you want to feel more empowered in your life – is it physically, emotionally, financially, in relationship, at work, or spiritually? In order to feel stronger, and to live with authenticity, you also need to embrace vulnerability. You have to let go of who you think you “should” be, and build strength and confidence from small every day choices, which eventually become habits, and new neural pathways.

I recently heard Diana Nyad (the 63 year old who swam from Cuba to Key West last year) talk about what she believes is the key to success. She talked about her role models who always gave it their all (“Billie Jean King didn’t just play the tennis ball, she played the fuzz on the ball”), and about herself she said, “I couldn’t have done it a fingernail faster.” She offered this guidance, which I want to share with you, “Just like swimming across the lake, if you want to get to the other side of what you are facing, you find a way.”

As Navy women, let’s find a way to live this way now.



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Aaron Slamin  
good article..but i wonder...how and is it possible.. to do any of this...when for I would think nearly 17 years of my life starting at 21 on a navy ship “sea air mariner” bootcamp award best recruit meritorious advancement only top 5 percent can get this award if the company commander feels like giving it. oh I was 18 when i signed and went to bootcamp. I only met 1 recruiter and i like the idea of going to college and also being in the navy serving. I got straight A’s nearly my first semester in junior college had a part time job paying rent, buying my food, and learning quartermaster on a NRF FFG attached to high priority augment unit as the youngest and only non-prior service on a

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ship with 170 active and 30 selres where even the other reservist were rated senior prior service and me the little guy with no expierience and uniform..mandatory driller..i did not mention that 94 was the last year the navy let people join the enlistment and only 10 17-19 year olds signed it in the US that year Manpower Accession Data reports...because basically what I found out personally is it can be a real drain to learn the navy on a active duty ship on just 2 days a month sometimes 3..out at sea..and having to think it is possible to learn. active duty rates...when you are just trying to learn peoples names....there was a high turnover estimates say